



April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 in review

Prepared by the Executive members for the members of G&DHS
For the AGM April 16, 2025.

Preserving Our Family Histories for Future Generations

Our ancestors—whether Indigenous, settler descendants, newer generations, or recent Canadians—have all contributed to the rich history of our communities. Each of us carries important stories that deserve to be told. Historians seek the truth, striving to understand what really happened and how people have worked together over time. We share a common past, woven together through generations. Consider this: each of us has two grandmothers, four great-grandmothers, eight great-great-grandmothers, and so on—each with their own unique stories waiting to be remembered.

Every family needs both storytellers and story keepers. The Glencoe & District Historical Society encourages families to record their histories—write down stories, label the backs of photographs, and document the details that future generations will cherish.

Some families are fortunate to collaborate with authors like CJ Frederick, who transform family histories into engaging historical novels. Others use platforms like Remento or StoryWorth to compile family memories into beautifully bound books that can be passed down for generations. Online genealogy tools such as Ancestry.ca have also made it easier than ever to trace our roots.

Many families bring their archives and precious artifacts to the Historical Society for safekeeping. In today's digital world, we recognize what a treasure trove these collections are. While digitization allows for easy sharing, it does not guarantee long-term preservation. Whether in digital or physical form, historical records are always at risk. By working together to protect and document our shared past, we ensure that future generations will have access to the rich stories that shape our community.

These are our aims for 2024/2026:

- Connect with membership and build close, working relationships with all our local groups, our regional heritage groups, and the elected reps and staff people of Southwest Middlesex and County of Middlesex.
- Ramp up our outreach and channels. Mobilize an IT circle to support improved communication and decision-making.
- Digitize and record our stories, curate, preserve, upload, and share. Figure out better platforms for working together. Facebook groups don't cut it.
- Learn the tools offered by dynamic governance, and the flourishing business canvas
- Bring our elders and youth together. Tell all the stories. 10,000 years of local history. Place making.
- Build a cultural network to link history with tourism. Nurture and support the arts in heritage and cultural communities.
- Lead the interactive Barn Quilt Trail project, which features an alliance of four organizations plus FedDev Government of Canada, the funder. Link our cultural assets to local tourism strategies and investments. Work with Middlesex county tourism.
- Advocate for county archives. Interpret history along the Thames river Watershed arts corridor
- Invite skilled local people and support their history passions. Build teams around peoples' interest. Assign domains. Delegate authority.
- Update and revise our bylaws. Build a closer working relationship with the Ontario Historical Society.
- Build out our organizational structure. We have a great foundation in our bylaws featuring managers. Build a circular hierarchy to support workers, facilitators, leaders, and admin support.
- Engage the branding dream team to do an agile branding process for G&DHS, the interactive Barn Quilt Trail, and our various groups and projects that need a brand
- Figure out how to tell our amazing stories, make sure they are preserved and interpret the amazing history of Ontario Southwest, that we want to share with family, friends, community, travelers, guests, youth, new, Canadians, refugees, children, all of the people that make up our Rural society people.

Working towards a County Archives

G&DHS is a member of the Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives and we continue to educate and lobby County representatives of the importance of doing their part to preserve our social and cultural history. Middlesex County has no official mechanism for the preservation, storage and archiving of historical documents and artifacts, both public and private.

As the older generation transfers family histories, photos, and records to the next generation, much ends up in dumpsters. Middlesex County is one of a few counties in southern Ontario that does not have a County Archive. This means that the responsibility falls to volunteers and we need help.

Ken Willis and The Wardsville Museum

[Link](#) to Ken Willis' remarks in early December, 2025. [Link](#) to Denise Corneil's remarks to Southwest Middlesex Council April 9, 2025.

For over two decades, Ken Willis, Wardsville's Official Historian, has dedicated himself to preserving Wardsville's history, curating a collection donated by residents that tells the story of Wardsville and its people. The Wardsville Museum houses this collection of artifacts and stories that showcase Wardsville and Mosa's rich history.

On March 13th, the Glencoe and District Historical Society (GDHS) formally accepted the role of custodian for the Ken Willis Collection, which is housed at the Wardsville Museum, located at 1787 Longwoods Rd, Wardsville, ON N0L 2N0.

History of Wardsville Musuem

The Wardsville Museum holds deep historical and cultural value, but it currently faces significant infrastructure challenges:

- No running water or bathroom facilities, limiting its functionality and accessibility for visitors.
- Lack of wheelchair accessibility, making it difficult for all community members to enjoy.

We worry that these limitations leave the museum vulnerable to being considered "less viable for public use"—a concern given Southwest Middlesex's past decisions regarding historic buildings.

Following municipal amalgamation in 2000, which merged Glencoe, Appin, Melbourne, Wardsville, Mosa, and Ekfrid Townships into the newly formed Municipality of Southwest Middlesex (SWM), municipal officials began assessing buildings that were outdated and required significant investment to meet modern standards.

Among the casualties was the Wardsville Community Hall, once the heart of the community, with its wood floors, stage, and historic charm. It contained washrooms that served Little Kin Park. Despite its historical and functional value, the hall was put up for sale by public tender with a closing date of June 6, 2001, and ownership was transferred to a new owner.

To preserve a local gathering place, the municipality partnered with the Hammond Masonic Lodge, designating the Wardsville Masonic Hall as the new community center. In 2023, the

Wardsville Hammond Masons "went dark.". In 2025 the Masonic Hall was gifted to Southwest Middlesex.

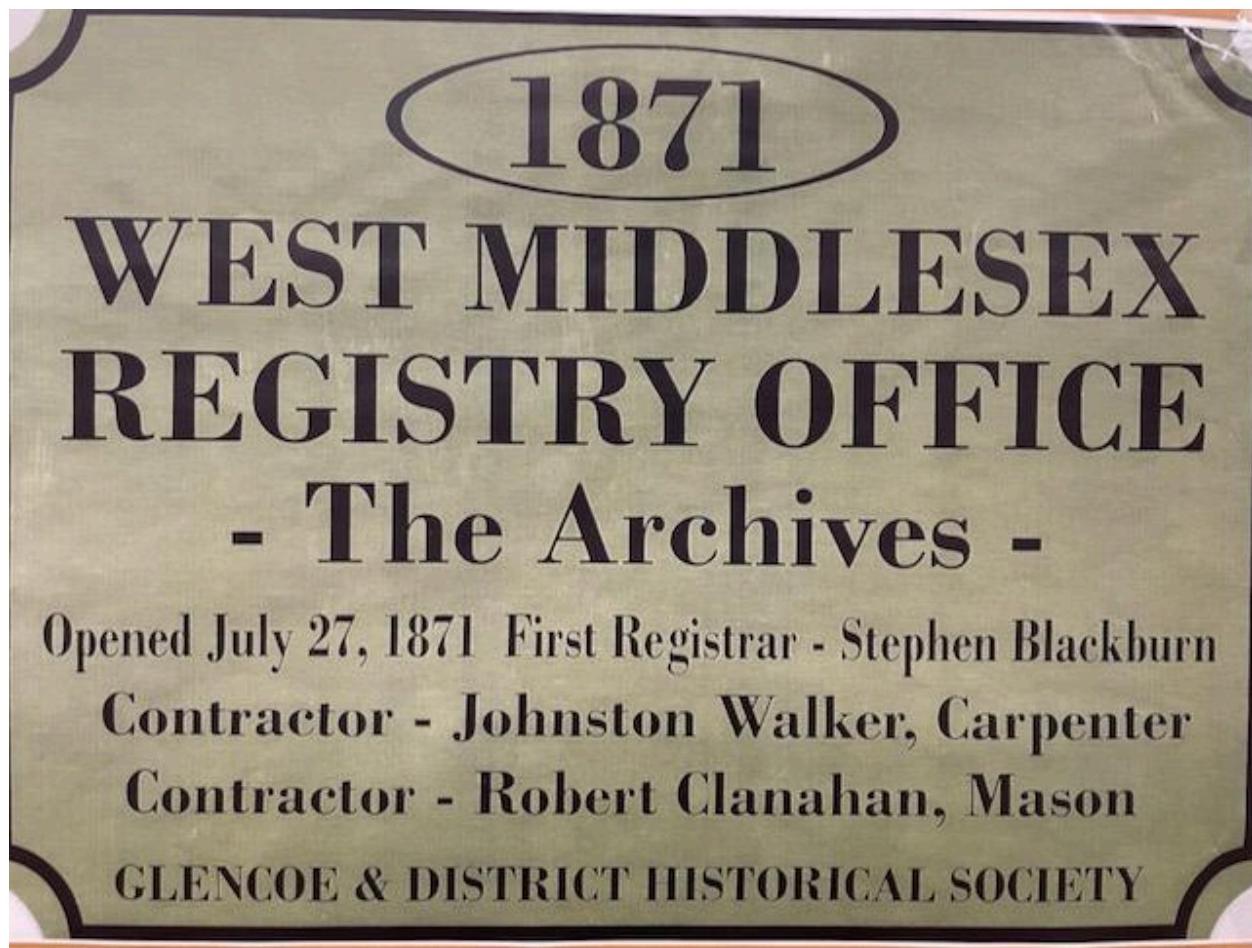
HERITAGE PLAQUE SIGNS

Twelve aluminum signs have been installed on houses, farms, and businesses in Glencoe, Caradoc, Mosa and Ekfrid. They are 11" X 16" in bronze or silver aluminum and cost \$150. Significant research by Harold Carruthers is required to determine facts about the properties. Contact research@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca if you would like to commission a sign for your property.

Houses: Information includes the year the house was built, the first owner's name and occupation, the builder's name, and the heritage location (original address).

Businesses: Name of business, architect, heritage location, and name of the builder.

Farm: original owner of the 100 acres, the builder/owner of the first house, year house was built and heritage location.



Cemetery Signs.

Thirty eight signs have been installed [within SWM](#), and three outside of SWM, but within our District. [Hykut Signs](#) was our local manufacturer. These standardized signs show the name of area cemeteries and when they were established. We have identified and signed the forgotten ones also, so that our pioneer ancestors will be remembered. This year, we concluded this project by getting these signs installed. Our partnership with the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex allowed this to happen. Our Society funded the manufacture of the signs and SWM covered the installation.

Reference: [List of cemeteries](#) in the district



Find A Grave

Ken Beecroft, Gerry Cross and other enthusiasts in the district assist with the Find A Grave.com website database. [Find A Grave](#) is a worldwide collection site developed to identify and document those who have gone before us. This initiative depends upon knowledgeable volunteers who share a passion for history. Identifying the individuals who make up history, especially local history is by no means an easy matter. Find A Grave volunteers have identified, pinpointed and defined over half a million cemeteries worldwide.

Ken Beecroft focuses on Find A Grave data development in the G&DHS geographic area, which dovetails well with cemetery and family research information onhand in the Archives. Obituary information used to be painstakingly gathered by volunteers but now it can be entered locally into this huge on-line data base and accessed by descendants from anywhere in the world. A great genealogical tool indeed.

Facebook moderator and Curator of the Glencoe Transcript Archives

Marie Williams has been actively involved in heritage projects, including the murals and house signs, working with Harold and Rick at Hykut Signs to ensure historical accuracy and clarity in the details.

She collaborated with Harold on organizing and promoting the Peter McArthur events, designed event posters for the Society's monthly meetings, and contributed to online event promotions. She also prepared display boards for both the arena anniversary and the Peter McArthur event.

Marie regularly photographs meetings and events to document and share the Society's activities.

Facebook Engagement

Marie Williams manages the The Glencoe and District Historical Society Facebook [Page](#) which has 1.1K followers, ensuring a minimum of two historical posts per week. Yearbook posts are particularly well-received, along with historical research compiled from the *Glencoe Transcript*, *London Free Press*, and other sources. She also collaborates with Harold on historical posts, which inspired her to create dedicated content for Burns Presbyterian Church Mosa in a Facebook Group. .

In a recent 28-day period, the Society's Facebook page achieved the following:

- **Page Views:** 43,232
- **Reach:** 10,245
- **Content Interactions:** 999
- **New Followers:** 24
- **Followers:** 1100

Heritage Mural Project.

In 2022, G&DHS was initially approved for a Grant from Middlesex County, the “Makeover Middlesex 2022” program, which paid for the mural signs. The historical society funded the installations.

We have plans for more murals in Appin, Melbourne, and Wardsville and need to find sponsors. Harold Carruthers is coordinating. Current locations are:

McKellar Hotel - 230 [Main Street](#), Glencoe, ON. Photo shows East side of Main Street. Between McRae and McKellar Street

CIBC, [252 Main St](#), Glencoe, ON N0L 1M0. Photo shows Main Street during the 1890s looking north.

The [Archives](#) - Photo shows the Glencoe Town Hall, 1898 - 1962.

The [Archives](#) - Photo shows the Glencoe Post Office and Customs House, 1909 - 1965.

Appin Main street - Photo shows General Store east side of Main Street.

Melbourne at [Longwoods and Melbourne Road](#). . Photo shows Main Street at the time of the Melbourne Bank Robbery.

Wardsville, [1787 Longwoods Road](#) on the Wardsville Museum wall - photo shows Main Street.

[Glencoe Fair Grounds](#), two murals featuring the Glencoe Fair installed by the Glencoe Agricultural Society.

Foodland - [195 Main St](#), Glencoe, ON N0L 1M0. Photo shows Apple Pickers, Ekfrid Gore Road.



Mary Simpson's grandson Ryan Snider at Strathburn Park, [3577 Middlesex County Rd 2](#), Glencoe, ON N0L 1M0.

Connecting with Membership

By Harold Carruthers

Current membership on March 31, 2025 is 109. This is up from approximately 55 in 2023. Seven members were gained from the House Sign project.

Estimated Volunteer hours - April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025 - 1945 hours. Those are just the recorded hours. Three times as many estimated.

Volunteers

Executive - List

Mary Simpson, President	519-318-1074	mary@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca
Norm McGill, Vice President	519-287-2161	norm@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca
Ayako Macdonald, 2 nd V.P.	519-802-6927	ayako@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca
Ken Beecroft, Past President	226-219-7017	allofus2@rogers.com
Diane Jedig, Treasurer	519-289-2053	d.jedig@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca
Denise Corneil, Secretary	519-693-7002	denisecorneil@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca
Rhonda Long, Director	519-873-0243	Retiring after one year.
Harold Carruthers, General Manager	519-857-2973	research@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca

We need skills in volunteer support and IT; project management; programming and promotions; Google Drive keeper and file management; by-law revision and other administrative skills required to run an organization in today's online world.

Managers:

General Manager - Harold Carruthers
Archives and Collections - Norm McGill
Membership Secretary - Harold Carruthers
Facebook Page - Marie Williams
Church Architecture - Interior & Exterior documentation - Bill Simpson
Obituaries - Ken Beecroft
Webmaster - Tyler Thomson

Teams:

Hospitality - Norm McGill, Maria Antunes, Erica Piercy (Event announcer), Kosta Vaklev.
IT - Ayako Macdonald, Tyler Thomson
Programming - Mary Simpson, Rhonda Long.
Find-a-Grave & Cemetery Care - Ken Beecroft, Gerry Cross, Harold Carruthers
The Simpson Descendants - Brian Huis, Wanda Simpson, Micheline Champagne-Johnston, Wendy Bestward, Mary Simpson, Dennis Simpson, Jan Simpson
Cemetery Boards - Eddie Cemetery Board - Harold Carruthers, Ken Beecroft.

[Wardsville Museum](#) - Ken Willis, Official Historian, and Denise Corneil

[A Split Village at a Cross Road, Melbourne-Middlemiss](#) - JoAnn Galbraith and Richard Hathaway

Appin Ekfrid Museum - Heather Jacobs, Dunc Hodgson, Marilyn MacCallum

[Canada Barn Quilt Trails](#) Denise Corneil, Mary Simpson, Diana Jedig.

Work with other organizations:

Objective - build close, working relationships with all our local groups, our regional heritage groups, and the elected reps and staff people of Southwest Middlesex, Newbury and County of Middlesex.

We do our best to support other cultural and heritage groups in our district:

- [A Split Village at a Crossroad](#), Melbourne, Ontario. JoAnn Lucas Galbraith, Richard Hathaway. They publish a weekly on-line newspaper.
- [Your Wardsville](#) - Wardsville Museum - Official Historian Ken Willis
- Appin Ekfrid Museum - Heather Jacobs, Dunc Hodgson, Marilyn MacCallum
- Tyrconnell Heritage Society - Backus Page House and Museum
- Middlesex Centre Archives
- Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives
- Burns Presbyterian Church - Mosa
- Glencoe Comprehensive Library
- Ontario Historical Society
- London & Middlesex Historical historical Society
- [London & Middlesex Branch - Ontario Genealogical Society](#). They are starting to administer a listserve of history and heritage groups.
- Strathroy & District Historical Society - great monthly programs.
- Upper Thames Military Re-enactment Society. They organize the annual memorial in early March every year.
- Chippewa of the Thames cultural staff
- Muncey community - Mt. Elgin Residential School - Deb Richter and Reta Hart. Brown Tom's School Days.
- History Symposium - monthly events.
- Municipality of Southwest Middlesex - new CAO Amanda Gubbels and recreation staff, Kevin Miller.
- United Empire Loyalists
- Royal Canadian Legion Reg Lovell Br 219, Glencoe
- Royal Canadian Legion Branch 510, Melbourne
- Words - by Josh Lambier. Monthly author series often featuring authors who write historical fiction and local histories.

Roots and Neighbours Community Summit

We want to work with SWM and all the organizations in our District on building collaborative working relationships. Sometime in 2026, we hope to meet at the “Roots and Neighbours Community Summit” to strategize to make the most of scarce resources and have fun doing it.

Working with Municipality of Southwest Middlesex

We have an elected Council that appreciates the history and cultural heritage. On December 10th we shared Christmas refreshments and met with elected representatives and staff. And on April 9, 2025, [we attended Council to thank the taxpayers of SWM formally for their support.](#)

Because of taxpayer support, G&DHS gives a safe home to documents, photographs and artifacts of local historical significance, which have been donated to us by area residents and Society members. The Archives has room for meetings, restoration workshop, a sales area, an office, stacks for books, documents and artifacts along with special collections, microfilm library, and archival space for artifacts.

Due to the commitment of Harold Carruthers, Irene Mathyson, and the Society during the 1990s, instead of being shredded after being digitized by the Ontario Government, our precious property records have made their way home to the original Registry Office, which we now call "The Vault".

We share this space with the community. This wonderful facility, The Archives, allows us to host educational activities onsite. We have everything available –access, washrooms, seating capacity, wifi, parking - the only think we are missing is a kitchenette.

G&DHS and the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex have an agreement for the stewardship of 178 McKellar Street. In March 2025, we met with municipal staff to clarify responsibilities for the building and grounds.

We share The Archives with other community organizations. Organizations such as local cemetery boards, such as Oakland and Eddie, and Southwest Middlesex’ “Celebrate Community Committee” have conducted their routine members’ meetings at 178 McKellar Street.

Southwestern Ontario's barn quilts

The [barn quilts](#)—vibrant artworks adorning barns—continue to captivate travelers, yet their origins and connections to local history remain unknown to many.

In 2024, four groups applied to the Tourism Growth Fund to transform the Barn Quilt Trails into a tourism experience: Glencoe & District Historical Society; Creative Communities - stewards of [Barnquiltrails.ca](#); Chippewa of the Thames cultural group; and EXAR Studios. While the

request was unsuccessful, the Glencoe & District Historical Society remains committed to supporting barn quilts.

This year, efforts will focus on revitalizing the **Native Women's Trail of Tears Barn Quilt Trail** and sustaining **BarnQuiltTrails.ca**, the national barn quilt database.

The Archive Alley featured in the [Middlesex Banner](#)

G&DHS and the Middlesex Centre Archives take turns finding authors to contribute to the Archive Alley, a full page featured in this biweekly [newspaper](#) covering Middlesex County news. This past year:

- Peter McArthur by Stephanie McDonald March 2024
- Barn Quilt history by Mary Simpson and Denise Corneil. April 2024
- Profile of Jean Hewitt May 20 2024
- Installment of suffragette history by Jean Hewitt complementing the 1st Wave Suffragettes meeting held at Tait's Community Centre, June 2024.
- Harold Carruthers - July Masons Go Dark [post](#).
- August: [Wardsville Little Kin Park](#) - Ken Willis and Denise Corneil. Website [post](#).
- September: WWI - Rooted and Remembered - CJ Frederick.
- October - They Settled on Riverside. Book by Bob Gentleman edited by Kathy Evans
- November - about the book: Brown Tom's Schooldays
- December 18 - Too Big for Santa Claus. By Reverend Enos Montour . Short Story From Brown Tom's Schooldays
- January 17, 2025. Josiah Henson by Brian Martin
- February 21 Battle of the Longwoods by Glenn Stott
- March - Carrie Jeffery. Capturing living oral histories.



IT Operation Annual Update

Over the past year, we have made several enhancements to support the society's operations through the strategic use of IT tools. These improvements have streamlined communications, increased accessibility, and improved overall efficiency for our volunteers and executive team.

1. Back-Office Improvements with IT Tools

Cybersecurity Awareness

All executive members completed a cybersecurity training program via an online video series, strengthening our awareness of digital safety practices.

Google for Nonprofits Integration

- Meeting Documentation:

All meeting minutes are now created in Google Docs and stored in our Shared Google Drive. Executive members can securely access them anytime, from any device.

- Contact Management:

We now manage current, past, and prospective member contact lists through Google Contacts, enabling efficient and organized communication for newsletters and announcements.

- Research Email Address:

A dedicated email, research@glencoehistoricalsociety.ca, was established to centralize and better manage research requests and inquiries.

- Shared Contacts Access:

We subscribed to a Shared Contacts service, allowing volunteers who handle email correspondence to access a common list of contact information.

Volunteer Scheduling

- Volunteer schedules are now maintained in a shared Google Calendar, which is viewable from our official website. A printable version of the calendar is also available thanks to a new feature in Google Calendar.

2. Hardware and Device Updates

- A Windows 11 laptop was set up, and all files from older computers have been safely backed up to Google Drive.
- A donated Apple desktop computer has been configured and made available for volunteer use.

3. Enhancing Virtual Engagement

- We purchased a Zoom Pro license to continue offering online and hybrid events. This has been instrumental in maintaining accessibility and participation.

- The AI-powered assistant features in Zoom have also helped streamline the process of taking meeting minutes by providing automatic summaries.

4. Capacity Building and Support

- Training Sessions: Hands-on IT training sessions were provided to executive members during meetings to ensure everyone can confidently navigate our digital tools.
- Tech Support Drop-ins: We launched an open Tech Support Drop-in service during society opening hours, offering assistance to volunteers and members needing help with devices, email, or online tools.

These improvements reflect our ongoing commitment to operational efficiency, digital inclusivity, and support for both our volunteers and members. As technology continues to evolve, we will remain dedicated to adopting practical and cost-effective tools that support the society's mission.

5. The [Website](#)

Mary Simpson and Tyler Thomson maintain the Wordpress website which continues to grow with local historical content.

Supporting and Promoting [Local Authors](#)

- [Peter McArthur](#), The Sage of Ekfrid
- CJ Frederick, [Rooted and Remembered](#)
- Reverend Enos Montour (1898-1985) a United Church minister and writer from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. [Brown Tom's School Days, 2nd Edition](#).
- Bob Gentleman, [They Settled in Riverside](#).
- Lelah, Bell Lumley, [This Neck of the Woods: Woodgreen](#), 1975
- Local Author bookfair - On December 5, 2024, we supported an [Afternoon With Authors](#) book sale organized by the Mary Webb Centre in Highgate, a [fundraiser](#) to restore the beautiful stained glass dome.
- Daniel Perry, researching book about [Thomas Gardiner](#)

“Peter McArthur: Our Famous Canadian – 1866 – 1924”

February 22, 2024, we kicked off a year long tribute to our local sage, Peter McArthur. Joining from Ireland, guest speaker Stephanie McDonald, described McArthur’s life and works, focussing on the last 16 years of his life after he moved back to the home farm in Ekfrid Township.

Another long- time McArthur enthusiast, Don Sinclair closed the afternoon event, speaking about his connection to McArthur through the home farm and, in particular, the demonstration woodlot where McArthur wrote about his unique appreciation for rural life and nature.

Website posts about Mr. McArthur are [here](#).

[My Friends the Trees](#) - story by Peter McArthur.

[The Horrible Horrible War](#) - by Stephanie McDonald

June 16, 2024. Peter McArthur. [An impressive crowd gathered](#) for the "Haunts of Peter McArthur" road trip Sunday afternoon, June 16, starting out at what was the McArthur homestead on McArthur Rd. before moving onto the Eddie Cemetery on Glendon Dr. and finally back to the Archives in Glencoe. Two plaques were unveiled along the way as McArthur trivia and memories were shared. Both young and more established fans of the works of the "Sage of Ekfrid," family members and historians enjoyed the afternoon which was organized by the Glencoe and District Historical Society. The Society is marking the 100th anniversary of the death of Peter McArthur in 2024.

October 27, 2024: Tree Planting to Honour Peter McArthur. Nineteen were in attendance for the tree planting ceremony honouring Peter McArthur held at the Eddie Cemetery on a sunny Sunday afternoon, October 27, the 100th anniversary of McArthur's death.



Isabel Sinclair and Kasia Kalita - next generation historians learning and sharing stories about their heritage.

Programs: Sharing Our History

Discover, preserve, and share the incredible stories of Southwestern Ontario's history.
We aim to ensure these histories are safeguarded and interpreted for all—family, friends, community members, travelers, guests, youth, newcomers, refugees, children, and everyone who contributes to the fabric of our rural society.

Report to the Membership of G&DHS

Dated: April 16, 2025

March 6, 2024 - The Memorial Service to remember those who sacrificed at the Battle of the Longwoods in 1814 organized by the [Upper Thames Military Reenactment Society](#).

April 17, 2024 – [Annual report](#) for 2023 and [highlights](#) from the meeting. Marilyn McCallum and Ken Willis retired from the Executive but continue their work as local historians. Joining the Executive were Diana Jedig (Treas), Denise Corneil (Sec'y), and Rhonda Long (Promotion).

May 25, 26, 2024 - Canadian Wartime Homefront - Backus Page House and Museum. Our volunteers participated in this event to bring awareness to what life was like on the Canadian Homefront during the two world wars. There were interactive stations, educational booths and book signings. We learned about wartime livelihoods: Rationing, Red Cross Efforts, Farmerettes, Entertainment, the Miss War Worker Pageant, and a Wartime Wedding.

May 29, 2024 **The Famous Five** presented by the [London Women's History Project](#) at Tait's Corners Community Centre. Set in Edmonton during the Great War, we saw the Famous Five return from a protest march to drink tea and discuss their cause and the war. Prime Minister, Robert Borden is in Edmonton and they must speak up.

Edmontonian Emily Murphy became the first female judge in the Commonwealth on January 1, 1916. On her first day in court and frequently thereafter, lawyers would begin their presentation by objecting to having their case heard by a woman judge because, they said, women were not "persons" as defined by the British North America Act of 1867.

Luckily for the women of Alberta, in 1917 the ruling by a Calgary judge, Alice Jamieson, was upheld by the Supreme Court of Alberta, thereby establishing the principle that both men and women were persons and therefore equals.

June 16, 2024. Peter McArthur. The "Haunts of Peter McArthur" road trip Sunday afternoon, We started out at what was the McArthur homestead on McArthur Rd. before moving onto the Eddie Cemetery on Glendon Dr. and finally back to the Archives in Glencoe.

June 22, 2024. Royal Canadian **Melbourne Legion Branch 510 dedicated a beautiful new mural** painted by Ohla Kovalenka located at the Melbourne Legion, [21884 Melbourne Rd, Melbourne](#).

July 20, 2024 - Tartan Days in Glencoe, over the past several decades, has been a unique opportunity for the community to celebrate its Gaelic heritage and allow the people of Glencoe and area to get involved in local activities and have some fun. G&DHS hosted an open house event at the ARCHIVES. After numerous visitors made their way to the Archives throughout the morning, a ceremony was held at 1:00 pm, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Glencoe, the belated 200th anniversaries of the Townships of Mosa and Ekfrid, the 170th anniversary of arrival of the first train in Glencoe.

G&DHS also had a booth near the Glencoe Train Station beside the [Old Auto](#) magazine. Author CJ Frederick joined the booth offering local readers a sneak peak to her first full length historical

fiction novel, Rooted & Remembered. The author's parents and husband were on hand to [help CJ Frederick](#) get this new book into the hands of readers.

July 28, 2024: - Appin Cemetery Commemoration

Every July we take time to honour those who came before us by conducting Memorial Service at an area cemetery. This past year it was held at Appin Cemetery, Ekfrid Township, where we enjoyed a beautiful Sunday afternoon under the shade, with about 40 people present. It was noted that the cemetery was very well maintained. [The history](#) of the Cemetery was provided by James May along with several Cemetery Board members and G&DHS members. After the Memorial, folks toured the cemetery. We are planning this event for July 2025 for Simpson Cemetery in Mosa Township. [Link to event report.](#)

August 21, 2024: [McEachren Collection at Forty-87](#) Well over 100 visitors, including members of the Glencoe and District Historical Society, neighbours, community members and John Deere enthusiasts from far and wide, gathered at the home of Dave McEachren on Olde Dr. on Wednesday evening, August 21.

After self-guided tours of his outdoor displays, Dave spoke to the crowd explaining that, at age 10, he had first become involved in the Glencoe Fair farm toy competition. He recalled buying his "first toy that he didn't play with" from Tips. Following the advice of his uncle, he chose to focus on one thing to collect and he chose John Deere. His focus grew from toys to signs, memorabilia, tractors and other equipment.

Heritage Farm Show, September Labour Day Weekend – Backus Page House Annual Farm Heritage weekend. Thanks to our volunteers, we were able to provide our travelling display inside the agricultural museum for the two day event. This certainly a worthwhile event for families. G&DHS has made a commitment to support this event every year.



Author and storyteller Bob Gentleman signed his new book, "They Settled in Riverside," and presented a copy to Ina Nelms for The Archives in Glencoe.



Gail McHardy-Leitch showed off her sunflower quilt block, painted at the Crazy 8 Barn, to barn quilt enthusiast Denise Corneil at the Heritage Farm Show.

Dated: April 16, 2025



Glencoe Fair, September: Harold and Norm maintained a steady presence at Glencoe Fair alongside the Quest Centre booth and CJ Frederick's book promoting her new book, Rooted and Remembered.

October 27, 2024: Tree Planting to Honour Peter McArthur. Speakers at the event, recognizing the "The Sage of Ekfrid" were Mirah Simpson, Isabel Sinclair, Kasia Kalita and Harold Carruthers.



November 11 – “Remembrance Day” G&DHS always lays a wreath in tribute to those who served during Canada’s wars and military conflicts. This year our wreath was laid by Past President Ken Beecroft and honourary member, Ina Nelms, who celebrated her 100th birthday on December 17, 2024.

January 25, 2025. The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation Educational Board Game. Aya Macdonald hosted a game board meetup. Says Aya: “Authentic, Original, Indigenous, all elements of this board game are credibly sourced. This board game is designed as a grade 10 History class resource but is not just for students and teachers — we all have a role to play in Truth and Reconciliation”

The [Truth in Truth and Reconciliation](#) by [Medicine Wheel Publishing](#).



Feb 1: Postcards with Norm

[Postcards with Norm at the Archives in Glencoe](#)

Norm McGill is our Vice-President and curator. He carefully organizes and describes our collection of artifacts and papers. Saturdays are a great time for members to drop in and we have started organizing special activities for our members and the public. Norm has organized a couple.

On March 15, 2025, we encouraged members to drop in with their computer and phone issues. Aya Macdonald was available to help people with their glitches and devised work flows for handling photos.

Karen Aranha goes home happy after Ayako solved her phone problem.



March 16 - John Little In Conversation: Reimagining The Donnellys

An on-line visit with award-winning author and filmmaker John Little to talk about [The Donnellys](#), his two-volume tour-de-force history of Southwestern Ontario's most famous true crime story.

Thank you from James Stewart Reaney, President: London and Middlesex Historical Society. [londonhistory.org](#) Just a quick note of appreciation, Josh, for the first-rate conversation with John Little. *The Donnellys* tragedy was reimagined over the fascinating twists & turns & revelations of the Words event. The audience was engaged & many seemed to be personally involved through family & other connections. Thanks, Mary Simpson, for bringing The Glencoe & District Historical Society family to the party. On behalf of The London and Middlesex Historical Society, thanks Josh & John & Mary for this excellence — & let's see what other adventures we might find.

March 30, 2025. Burns Presbyterian Church.

A great crowd attended Sunday's "Stroll Through Time" at Burns. The event had been postponed from February due to icy conditions. Morgan MacTavish served as narrator with cast members Sarah, Sophie, Anela and Audrey Faulds, Andrew Johnson, Courtney Bailey, John David MacTavish, Taylor Chalupka and Carol Leitch doing a great job in their roles. Scriptwriters and organizers were Flora Walker, Louise Campbell and Mary Simpson.

Meet our Executive

President, Mary Simpson: Mary is a champion for collaboration and is intent on inviting the younger generations into culture and heritage spaces. She enjoys networking with our sister organizations and identifying speakers and activities for [future programs](#). She is half way through her two year term and is actively seeking people who have a passion for local history to join the fun at the Society.

Vice President, Norm McGill: "Growing up in West Lorne after WWII, there were so many different veterans from different wars and eras and some of them told their stories. I always liked the old artifacts. Objects help us remember people and places. A lot of my personal collection is family and local – not expensive articles – but objects that become treasures as the years pass". Norm is a passionate collector who cares for the artifacts and papers housed in The Archives. He started collecting coins and stamps when he was five years old and the collections grew from there.

Past President, Ken Beecroft: This position provides continuity and transition from President and past president acts in the President's absence. Through 2023-24, G&DHS continued with on-going agenda items, allowing Past President duties to encompass "house projects". One Project involves [Ken's interest](#) in assisting with the [Find A Grave.com website](#) database. Find A Grav.com is a worldwide collection site developed to identify and document those who have gone before us.

Secretary, Denise Corneil: Taking on the role of Executive's secretary, she is beefing up the Society's admin capacity and acting as a link with Ken Willis to Wardsville. Denise was integral to the launch of North America's first "Story Telling" barn quilt trail. Denise animated the Wardsville residents to design a unique trail project which intertwined *fabric, film, paint, and pen*, showcasing the life of founders Mr. and Mrs. George Ward through thirty 8'x8' barn quilts crafted with 1000 volunteer hours in 2010.

Treasurer, Diane Jedig: Diana has 19 years of board governance within the Canadian CED Network. With 35 years in non-for-profit management, Diana Jedig excels in fundraising and project coordination. She is a member of Creative Communities and a stalwart supporter of [Canada Barn Quilt Trails](#). She is one of the protectors of the Native Women's Trail of Tears Barn Quilt Project and lives in Chippewa of the Thames community.

Director, Promotions & Outreach: Rhonda Long is a passionate advocate for Southwestern Ontario tourism, dedicating 18 years to promoting the region through "Daytripping in Southwestern Ontario." With a knack for forging connections across the tourism sector, from Direct Marketing Organizations to quaint museums, Rhonda's mission is to unveil the wonders of one's own backyard.

Director: IT & HR, Ayako MacDonald - Aya is a recent arrival from Tokyo who is captivated by local culture and history. One cultural insight that truly surprised her is the limited emphasis on local history in Canadian schools. This discovery ignited her passion for preserving the stories and traditions that shape our community. Aya brings a fresh perspective to our historical society by: modernizing workflows, connecting the past and present, and helping us plan for the future.

General Manager, Harold Carruthers: Harold manages operations and is assisted by Norm McGill. Harold is a wealth of knowledge and keeps the Archives and its collections and programs coordinated and supported. He is the official historian for the Carruthers Clan internationally and is widely known throughout history circles.

Honouring Lorne Munro

We miss Lorne. We lost Lorne at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital on Monday, March 18, 2024 William "Lorne" Munro passed away in his 91st year. Predeceased by his wife Phyllis (2023). Dear father to Janice and Tom McCallum, Susan Sinclair and Steve Schneider and Cheryl and Roy Neves.

Lorne was a great supporter of local projects. When the local Society didn't have many active projects, Lorne encouraged us to support other projects. Lorne helped digitize 2300 wills and maintained a list of obituaries and births dating back to the 1870s.

Objects of G&DHS

By-laws and Constitution

Founded in 1978, the Glencoe & District Historical Society (G&DHS) set out on a mission to preserve the rich history of Southwestern Ontario, particularly around the Glencoe area. Ambitious projects, such as mapping local cemeteries, took place from 1978 to 1988. In 1983, G&DHS found a home in the basement of the old Andrew Carnegie Library and expanded to both floors in 1994. A substantial collection of land registry deeds was rescued in 1997, finding a secure home in the original land registry vault. The partnership restoration of the Glencoe Train Station in 2001 became a symbol of the society's commitment to preserving local heritage. The Society is a not-for-profit volunteer organization with charitable status and a member of the Ontario Historical Society.

The 2018 relocation of the Glencoe library allowed the Society to shift to the old land registry office and library at 178 McKellar Street, inadvertently returning the land deed collection to its original home, now known as The Archives. Facing the challenge of preserving historical materials in a digital world, G&DHS actively educates and lobbies for administrative and archival support, supported by a membership of almost 100 individuals and backing from the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex.

Our objectives are:

- To promote, encourage and foster the study of local history and genealogy, including original research. We encourage, support and solicit research information on heritage buildings in our District. We lend our support to other community groups who are active and interested in the preservation and restoration of heritage buildings.
- To provide and maintain a local archival repository for the collection and preservation of books, manuscripts, typescripts, charts, maps, photographs, journals, Photostats, microfilms, tapes and artifacts.
- To reproduce some of the presentations presented to the Society, as well as other research and materials.
- To provide education through newsletters, presentations, social media and participation in local and surrounding area events.

The Society actively collects and preserves local artifacts, showcasing rotating displays and a captivating train display on Main Street.

Operating three days a week, G&DHS opens its doors to the public, offering free access to historical materials. Marie Williams maintains a popular [Facebook](#) Page featuring local photos and history from the Transcript and Free Press archives. An [up-to-date website](#) features reports of our events, photos, videos, and history vignettes.

G&DHS actively supports neighboring heritage organizations. We work together to foster an appreciation for Southwestern Ontario's rich history.